This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

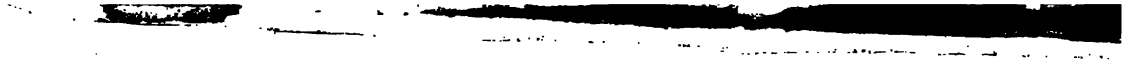
About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

MEMORIALS
OF
GEORGE MILLS

600085778+

11144 f k.



Yorktown B. M.

2/6

Newburgh
N. Y.

MEMORIALS OF

MR. COUNCILLOR GEORGE MILLS,

OF SHEFFIELD.

Yours very Truly
Geo. Mills

MEMORIALS

OF

MR. COUNCILLOR

GEORGE MILLS,

OF SHEFFIELD.

BY

W. R. SUNMAN.

WITH ADDENDA

BY

REV. JAMES CAUGHEY,

AND

REV. JOHN GUTTRIDGE.

SHEFFIELD:
J. MORTON, PRINTER AND STATIONER, UNION STREET.
1865.

BODLEIAN
20·1·1900
LIBRARY

DEDICATION.

To Mrs. Mills,

Laithefield House,
Sheffield.

Dear Madam,

To you, do I most respectfully inscribe these pages. Memorials of one, between whom and yourself, there existed a depth of affection, and strength of confidence, never surpassed; they will possess to you an absorbing interest.

The work of preparation which has engrossed my attention for many weeks, has been to me a labor of love. I venerated the man whose humble biographer I have thus become. He was no ordinary man.

The prayer with which I commit my book to the public, is, that your stricken heart may be comforted, by the thought of the manifold virtues of the sleeping one; and that many others may be led to follow in the footsteps of him, whom I feel it an honor to have been able to call my friend, and who was not only a man of business, but pre-eminently a "man of God."

Accept, dear Madam, my expressions of
sympathy and esteem.

THE AUTHOR.

Sheffield, November 1st, 1865.

CONTENTS.

Chapter I.	Introductory	Page	9
,, II.	Early Life	,,	16
,, III.	Conversion and Church Work .	,,	22
,, IV.	Preaching	,,	32
,, V.	Business	,,	42
,, VI.	Home	,,	53
,, VII.	Sorrow	,,	64
,, VIII.	Closing Scenes	,,	75
,, IX.	Condolence	,,	91
,, X.	Parting Counsels . . .	,,	99
,, XI.	Addenda	,,	110

MEMORIALS OF

MR. COUNCILLOR GEORGE MILLS,

OF SHEFFIELD.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

THERE is a class of men now very largely represented in the commercial world, who are called "self-made men." And rightly too are they thus called, for men are to a great extent the arbiters of their own destiny, the architects of their own fortunes:

"Man is his own star."

The beginnings of such men were obscure; in fact, it seems almost to require an obscure beginning for a man now-a-days to *rise* to wealth and position. The poor lad who came from a country village, to one of our large cities, with only a few coppers in

his pockets, and wooden clogs on his feet, and walked the wilderness of streets without a friend to help him; and then, step by step, rose by his honesty and industry, until he became a millionaire, and received a title at royal hands; appears to be only one of a numerous host, who from the lowest dregs of poverty have risen to affluence and honour. A boy commencing life might almost be tempted to believe, that the surest way to success is to be without a friend, and to begin with nothing.

The subject of this memoir, however, did not commence life under such unmitigated disadvantages. He was fortunate in being trained in a comfortable home, for his father was in receipt of liberal wages, and by his ingenuity and inventiveness as a machinist, added considerably to his income; and when the lad was old enough to commence working, he went to labor under his father's auspices, and at his father's trade, which was that of leatherdressing and fellmongering. But still his position was obscure. He had nothing but what he worked for with his hands. And from such a position he rose year by year, till he ranked among those who may well be called "the aristocracy of trade."

It does not seem possible for all men to *rise* to wealth and position. Some seem to have a con-

stant tendency to sink. Others, in spite of the most favorable opportunities, are no better off than when they commenced life. While others do not seem to possess the necessary qualifications of mind, character, and disposition to ensure them success. Our great dramatic poet says,

> "There is a tide in the affairs of men,
> Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune."

But few men comparatively seem to know when the tide is at the flood, and therefore miss the *one* chance, which is never again allowed them.

Our friend did not belong to either of these descriptions of men. His tendency was to be buoyant—to rise. When opportunities of advancement presented themselves to him, he seized them and made the best of them. And he most certainly possessed the natural qualifications which ensure success, for he was cheerful, judicious, industrious, and persevering,

But another element which has largely contributed to the success of many, and an element which is often not reckoned at all among causes of success, is the *religious* element. There are many who to-day are the proprietors of fortunes, who, but for their religion, if not dead, would be grovelling among the lowest and most degraded of men—outcasts from society, which unfortunately scorns

the penurious and guilty. And even those who perhaps *without* the influence of religion, might have raised themselves to independence, are yet laid under vast obligations to its hallowed power. There may be all the honorableness, and integrity, and perseverance, which are absolutely looked for as the characteristics of a *true man;* but religion ennobles even these, shedding upon the natural gifts a lustre which is celestial, and causing others to feel, when they are in company with such a man, that they are in the presence of the Christian, which is the "highest type of man." A man's religion often helps his success vastly, for men have more or less confidence in it always; and whether his creed be the same as their own or not, or however much it may differ from theirs; they are yet disposed, if they think him a sincere adherent thereof, to give him credit for possessing those exalted qualities of character, which are not always found in man's nature, but which are at once the essential requirements and results of a sincere religious belief.

The subject of this memoir was deeply religious. His whole being seemed to be permeated by the influence of Jesus. Doubtless to this fact may be traced much of the success of his life. Saved in *early youth* from sowing "wild oats," he had after-

wards no bitter harvest to gather. And shielded throughout life by the power of religion, he became not the victim of those snares, by which so many others, who may have possessed the same natural characteristics, have fallen.

In writing thus, it is not to be supposed that we wish it to be understood that he was a *perfect* man. Doubtless, as even the holiest have had to confess, he had besetments and failings, by which he might have fallen, had it not been for the power of religion, and which he had specially to guard, as a wise general guards with extra care, the weakest point in his fortifications. But his failings, if he had them, did not come to the front. There was in him no obtrusion of the erring. The prominences of his character shone with the lustre of purity. The everyday man which people looked upon was always reflective of the virtues of Christianity. The palm of *perfectness* must be awarded to the glorious Nazarene. But we may admire and imitate that in the disciple which was noble and true, and there was much of that.

But in treating of the reasons of success in life, another, of vast importance, should be named—*training*. Trite as the saying is, we cannot find one truer, "As the twig is bent, the tree inclines." At least the influence of early training was very

apparent in the life and success of our deceased friend. He had the natural qualities which ensure success. His religion also assisted him in that direction. But the training of his young life influenced the whole of his career. Happily for him, he was associated with the manly and the pious from his birth. We have said *happily*, and we have said it advisedly; for we are persuaded that were the Divine Creator to give men the chance of choosing their own parentage, they could not ask a greater blessing than to be given to the charge of godly parents. Our subject was thus favored. In his father, he saw all that was generous and large-hearted, united with the sternest integrity; and in his mother, he saw womanly graces and tenderness developed in no ordinary degree. It is not wonderful that, contemplating their excellences from his earliest days, and being associated with them more or less till mature life, he grew into the same image; and carried into all the dealings of his life, the exercise of those virtues, which had been grafted into him from his infancy.

Parents may take encouragement. The example now given to the world, may assure them that they can mould their children after the standard of the beautiful and true. "Train up a child in the way *he should go*, and when he is old he will not de-

part from it," is the declaration of Divine wisdom —and what was true when Solomon sat upon the throne of Israel, is true to-day.

CHAPTER II.

EARLY LIFE.

THE subject of this memorial sketch, GEORGE MILLS, was born October 3rd, 1820, in the town of Leeds. His parents were Samuel and Ann Mills. The former lives still, surviving the son whom he loved. The latter has for several years been numbered with the spirits of the just made perfect. Their home was for more than forty years a scene of uninterrupted affection and harmony. Into such a circle was our subject introduced, in the year 1820—the firstborn of twelve children, of whom seven lived to be trained. He appears to have been the object of the intensest tenderness on the part of his parents. They expended on him the fulness of their hearts' parental fondness. But with all their love there was no injudicious indulgence. The waywardness of infancy, and the passions of childhood, were curbed and restrained by hands gentle, yet forceful; for the parents knew how much depended upon the right direction of *the* early life of their firstborn son.

He was a beautiful child: his fair open countenance, and rich waving hair, irresistibly attracting attention, so that admiring ladies caressed him even in the streets as they passed him. Could he be otherwise than the pride of his parents' hearts? But if he was prepossessing in person, his inner nature, even from his earliest years was characterized by purity and gracefulness. He was inclined to piety from childhood; and the love of God, and the love of his fellow-men, were the principal features of his higher life till its close.

When about nine months old, he narrowly escaped death by fire. By some inadvertence a lighted candle was left burning near the bed where he lay. The candle burnt down to its socket, and ignited the drapery near. The flames crept quickly close to the sleeping babe, but his father discovered the catastrophe just in time to snatch his darling from the danger, and the fire was soon extinguished.

When about eighteen months old he had a severe and protracted illness, but ultimately quite overcame it, and became a strong and healthy child.

He was sent to a respectable school, and educated for several years, as far as was in that day thought desirable, for the commercial life which

lay before him. His Sabbaths also were spent in the Sunday school, and in the various services of the Sanctuary, even to the early prayer meeting on the Lord's day, which he attended regularly with his father.

As he grew in years, the traits of character which distinguished his childhood, matured and strengthened, so that he became a pattern of obedience, cheerfulness, and goodness, to his younger brother and sisters. There was, however, no lack of the masculine, courageous, and honorable about his disposition, of which one instance, to which he often afterwards alluded with pardonable pride, will be evidence enough. One of his playfellows was browbeaten and illtreated, by a strong and overbearing companion. This excited his anger, and he interposed and remonstrated. Remonstrances being of no avail, he told the circumstances to his father, and asked his permission to back his words with arguments more striking. Fighting, as a rule, was strictly forbidden by his father, but on this occasion his father gave his consent, and George very soon subdued the domineering spirit of the boy-bully.

An incident which occurred in his younger days will illustrate remarkably the direction of his life by Divine Providence. A gentleman in London,

of wealth and standing, who was acquainted with the family, and was specially fond of the young George; communicated with his parents, and expressed his earnest desire to adopt him as his own son, because he was childless; at the same time making brilliant promises as to what he would do for him in the future. The father of our friend was willing that the arrangement should be completed, because the prospect seemed so favorable, believing also that the bias of the boy towards piety would save him from any disastrous consequences, which might arise from irreligious associations. But his mother, with true maternal instinct, mistrusted the arrangement; and in anxious prayer sought Divine direction, trembling at the thought that worldly advancement under such circumstances *might* result in the loss of his soul. Her prayer was answered. The treaty was not closed. And since then, events have proved how unmistakeably the youth's course was shaped by an all-wise and all-good Providence.

When our friend was about twelve years of age, a change took place in his father's circumstances which necessitated his removal to Sheffield. He had for several years possessed the confidence of his employers at Leeds, being a first-class workman, and very steady. But in the year 1838,

strike took place among the workmen at Leeds, and Mr. Mills was *obliged* to leave with the rest. He therefore removed to Sheffield, bringing the lad with him, and leaving the rest of the family in Leeds, till he could arrange comfortably for their coming. The lad then began to work with his father, and being diligent and earnest, soon became very useful. When their sojourn in Sheffield had lengthened out to five months, the lad began to desire to visit his mother and the rest of the family in Leeds; and the way in which this desire was carried out, will shew the indomitable perseverance and resolution which possessed him, and which may be looked upon as the key to his after success in life. The stage coach was then the only means of conveyance, and somewhat expensive, and so he resolved to walk the whole distance, though his father would willingly have paid his fare. He rose early one morning and started on his journey, and though a snow storm came on, he yet pressed forwards to Leeds, spending only threepence for refreshments, and never once sitting down from the time he left Sheffield, till he reached his mother's house at Leeds. Even then he was not thoroughly exhausted, for when he had rested a short time, he went out to play at marbles with some former companions.

The boy of twelve years old, who was undaunted by the prospect of such a journey, and who so bravely persevered till every step of the road had been traversed; was not likely in after life to be staggered with difficulties, nor to sit down in despair at the foot of any mountain which might raise itself in his path. He was made of somewhat the same material, as that of which all men are made who leave their mark upon the history of the race. True, he coursed not the career of the warrior, who leads his troops through every opposition, either of men or material, until he crowns them with victory. Nor did he grapple with difficulty, when it lay in the path of the North-West Passage, as have done the noble Franklin, McClintock, and others. But *this* he did: by sheer perseverance and determination he raised himself up from a position of obscurity to one of wealth and honor; and has left behind himself, memorial monuments, not carved in marble, but engraved indelibly upon human hearts.

CHAPTER III.

CONVERSION AND CHURCH WORK.

"There's a Divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough-hew them how we will."

How true these words are, and what correct perceptions of the supernatural dwelt in the colossal mind of the Bard of Avon, will be yet further illustrated in the circumstances of the life of Mr. Mills, as related in this chapter.

The child of pious parents, and associated with pious influences from his earliest days, it is not wonderful that the sneer of the sceptic, as to men's religiousness being the result of their training, should receive some kind of foundation from the story of his life. Religiousness, however, is not always the result of training; and when it is, the blessedness of it only shows more plainly the vast importance of parents training their children religiously. He was religiously inclined from his childhood, and before he had well entered upon the season of youth, he became thoroughly decided *for* God.

When the residence of his father and family in Sheffield became permanent, he attended Stanley Street Sunday School; and though led by one or two of his companions, he joined the Young Men's Bible Class at Ebenezer Wesleyan Chapel, he still adhered to the Stanley Street Sunday School; attending also a Night School there, and ultimately becoming very useful.

The circumstances under which he became a member of the Church, with which for so many years he was identified, were of a singular character. He was about the age of fourteen years, when the impression was made very deeply upon his mind, that he should no longer possess the form of godliness merely, but should also enjoy its power; and the glorious culmination of all his serious desires and religious feelings was, his conversion to God. It was in a class meeting that the Holy Spirit wrought so powerfully upon his mind, as to constrain him to say,

"Nay, but I yield, I yield,
I can hold out no more;
I sink, by dying love compelled,
And own thee conqueror."

He desired to join the Wesleyans at Ebenezer Chapel, and for that purpose went twice to one of the classes, but the leader was absent on both oc-

casions. Our friend was much discouraged by this, and mentioned it to a companion, who persuaded him to go with him to his class at Stanley Street, saying, "My leader is sure to be present." He went, gave in his name as a member, and thus commenced the honorable, active, and useful church career of thirty years, which has just closed. The Church at Stanley Street was then known as the "Protestant Methodists," but in consequence of various amalgamations, the Churches are now designated "The United Methodist Free Churches." As he became better acquainted with the principles of religious freedom, as cherished by the various offshoots of Methodism, now so happily amalgamated, they commanded to the fullest extent, his consent and admiration. In his later days, his love for the connexion with which he was identified became more ardent, and his desire for its extension and prosperity more intense than ever. The United Churches have lost in him a most zealous and attached friend.

Soon after he joined the Stanley Street Church, he became an energetic Sunday School teacher, tract distributor, and sick visitor. He delighted especially in the latter office; the work of comforting the afflicted and sorrowing, and pointing the *dying sinner to* Jesus the Crucified, being particu-

larly congenial to his nature. In many cases he was remarkably successful. Correspondence found since his decease, evidences how useful he was; and one case he sometimes referred to, with great satisfaction and delight, in which he went to visit a poor woman, who evidently had to die, and was in a condition of the most abject despair. But he began to unfold to her the greatness of the Saviour, and his all-sufficiency to pardon and save; and the woman grasped the salvation of Jesus while he was yet speaking, and afterwards died in a state of mind almost ecstatic. The angels doubtless rejoiced over this poor brand plucked out of the burning, but not one of them rejoiced more than did the happy instrument of the salvation.

He also engaged heartily in the holding of cottage prayer meetings at various times. In this work he was appointed to labor in the band conducted by Mr. William Beaumont, now a venerable laborer in the vineyard of Jesus. Mr. Mills delighted ever afterwards to call him his "General," because he was the first he was appointed to labor in conjunction with, and because it was in connection with that band of prayer leaders that he began to speak publicly. As an exhorter he commenced, but went on from step to step, till he became a fully accredited local preacher.

One who knew him well at this time, being an almost inseparable companion, states concerning him that he was a robust, well-built, and prepossessing young man; and a very hard worker, both at his daily toil and in all his church duties; that in his attendance at the public and private means of grace, he was regular and unwearied; and that when he engaged in devotional exercises, it always seemed as though Heaven came down to earth. The people always anticipated a good meeting when George Mills was present. The same authority also states that he was even-tempered and cheerful in disposition. He never saw him vexed or "put about" but once, and then the circumstances, though amusing to others, through a barbarous habit of treating the most trying pain in creation with levity, were anything but amusing to him. He had been laid up for some three weeks with the "tic," and was attended by the late Doctor Turton. One day the doctor came into the house, and when he saw his patient wearing a most woe-begone countenance, he burst into a loud and long fit of laughter. His patient was very much annoyed, and with a sharp reproving tone of voice said that "he thought there was not much to laugh at." The doctor however said that "it would be a *foolish* thing for him to look gloomy too, over an

affair which could not be helped." The patient was not half satisfied with the explanation, not being able to see or *feel* any joke about the matter, as we are inclined to think few people would, who were in his position. But the doctor being of a genial temperament, and moreover an attached friend, soon managed to dissipate his patient's ill-humour, and the cessation of the disease restored his usual equableness of disposition.

Soon after he began to preach, he was made the leader of the class in which he had been meeting as a member; and until the time of his death he sustained the honorable and onerous office of pastor in Christ's fold. At one time the leader of two numerously attended and influential classes, he was made eminently useful, discharging his duties with a fidelity and regularity, which never flagged till his health began to fail. His method of conducting a class meeting was very happy. He strove by all means to make every person feel at home. The authority before quoted has heard him many times make use of sentiments like this, "Now, we are all brothers and sisters here; let us talk to each other just as though we were at our own firesides." The last time he met his class, a few weeks before his decease, the class led by Mr. Beaumont joined his, and they together had a most

blessed meeting. That night it was arranged between them that the two classes should join thus once in three weeks, but alas, our friend never met again.

Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, he has joined the blood-washed throng before the Throne, who rest not day nor night in their communings together, concerning the love of God, as manifested in the Cross of Christ. "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another, and the Lord hearkened and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him, for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name. And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of Hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him."

As a leader he was brought much into contact with some of the poorer members of the Church, and had to obtain relief for them from the funds instituted for that purpose, in the Church. But he did not confine himself to seeking relief for them. He frequently relieved them out of his own purse, and that most liberally, so that oftentimes he has made the widow's heart to sing for joy—and when the eye has seen him, it has blessed *him.* *He was* always a most liberal supporter

of all Church institutions, but his special beneficence was poured out upon the necessitous and distressed. Nor was his liberality confined to the poor of the Church, for he did good unto all men. Philanthropic societies of all descriptions commanded his liberal patronage. But he loved as well to be his own almoner. Even at the works, he was incessantly applied to for assistance, and never was the needy and worthy applicant sent empty away. One instance of his liberality will suffice to show how princely he was even in his benevolence. A young man employed in a shop which he frequently had occasion to visit, was unwell, and continued to grow worse for some time, his increasing weakness manifesting itself in his countenance. At last Mr. Mills asked him if he was under medical treatment.

"No, sir;" said the young man.

"Why, how is that?" said Mr. Mills. "Have you not been ailing for some time?"

"Yes, sir; but I cannot possibly afford to pay a doctor's fees. I am not in a position to be able to do it."

"O, then, if that is it," said Mr. Mills, giving him a sovereign, "take this; and go to my doctor, and tell him that I sent you to him, that he is to treat you till you are better, and George Mills will settle with him."

It may be well here to give some idea of the characteristics of his *spiritual* life. Religion was with him a constant and abiding reality. Its spirit and joys dwelt in his heart. The same cheerfulness which characterized his natural disposition, pervaded his profession of religion; and as an individual he doubtless did much to remove from the minds of those with whom he came in contact, the old fallacious idea, that religion was only designed to reduce our pleasures to a minimum. The glorious trio of graces spoken of by Paul remarkably characterized him. He cherished strong confidence in God, so that in the hour of darkest trial his *faith* never wavered, and his spirit never sunk in despair. *Hope*—bright, blooming hope—always bore him aloft, so that while others may have been overwhelmed by the boisterous billows, he was only covered with the spray. Our idea about him is, that he was a man, who when once reconciled and made a child of God, was seldom or never afflicted with a doubt of his reconciliation and sonship. He would as soon have thought of doubting his own existence, as of doubting his interest in the precious blood of Jesus. And *charity*—beautiful charity—the chiefest grace of the three, took in him the shape of a burning love to the souls of all men, and a special regard for, and veneration of,

those who were united in Church fellowship with him. His influence never troubled the still waters of Church harmony, but when they were disturbed, he cast oil upon their troubled waves. He often accomplished the Godlike work of reconciliation, and reunited those, who but for him, might ever afterwards have been separated by misunderstanding and ill-feeling.

With this undisturbed confidence in his own salvation—this bright buoyant hope—and this Christianlike charity—it is not wonderful that he should be so devoted to the cause of Christ. And religious work with him was no child's-play—an engagement to be taken up and laid down at will. He had a solemn sense of his own responsibility, and though sometimes he shrank from the important and onerous duties the Church laid upon him from time to time, and wept much in secret over his insufficiency; yet he performed his duties while in health, with an ardour and perseverance, to some extent, worthy of the noble cause in which he labored.

Reader, is thine heart right with God? Art thou labouring in the cause of Christ? If so, then cherish the same faith, hope and charity, and follow in the laborious footsteps of him of whom we write.

CHAPTER IV.

PREACHING.

THE office of the lay-ministry will, we imagine, require no labored apology from us in this day. Its results are the best arguments for its necessity and utility. The position of all the Methodist bodies in England and America—numbering at the time we write, in connection with the English Conferences about six hundred thousand members, with congregations consisting of at least a million and a half persons,—and in connection with the American Conferences about a million of members, with at least two millions in congregations—is not to be traced entirely to the administrative and governmental acumen of their presidents, nor to the powerful preaching of their regular ministry; but is in a very large measure due to the employment of lay agency in the ministry. Greatly opposed to it as he was at first, Mr. Wesley's acute and sagacious mind saw, that it might be made use of as a missing link, in the great chain of Christian agency forged for the conversion of the

world; and overcoming every prejudice in his own mind against it, he set *that* agency in motion, which to-day with its tens of thousands of agents, comprises a great portion of the wisdom, talent and zeal of the Church of Christ. How wisely he acted in thus doing, may be gathered from the fact that all the regular ministers of the various Methodist Churches come forth from the ranks of the lay ministry; that the Gospel has been preached, and Churches raised up in thousands of villages and towns where the regular ministers, on account of their numerous other engagements, never could penetrate; and that other Churches are striving to follow in the wake of the Methodist Churches, and raise up a lay ministry of their own. Because we value the success of the Churches of Jesus, by whatever name they may be called, we most heartily bid them God speed.

Our deceased friend became a local preacher when about twenty-one years of age. Mr. Thomas Wells was appointed to hear him preach his first sermon. It was in a cottage house, but the room was crowded, and a most gracious influence rested upon the congregation. The sermon was a very creditable performance, and in the prayer meeting which followed, the Holy Spirit was richly poured out. When he began to preach, he attended a

Theological Class at Surrey Street Chapel, which was conducted by one of the local preachers; and tried by every means in his power to make himself an "able minister of the New Testament." From the time he became a Sunday School teacher he labored hard in study; but when he began to preach, he studied still more. This was no small task, for after toiling with his hands from early morning till late evening, he was not in the best of trim for brain work; but his natural determination overcame the difficulty, and so night after night he knelt down at his bedside, with the Bible and other books before him, and studied till the hour was far advanced. He chose the kneeling posture, not only because it was more devotional, but also, because if he sat to read, he so soon fell asleep, on account of his bodily weariness. But even kneeling, he could not always keep himself awake, and has been found many times in the morning, asleep upon his knees, with his book still open before him.

At first, the task of preaching was an intolerable burden to him, because he keenly felt his own inability sufficiently to honor the great work. For instance, the first time he was appointed to preach at Surrey Street Chapel, he felt great reluctance to go, almost besought the Lord not to send him, and

with strong crying and tears prayed for grace to help him in the time of need. This reluctance however wore off in time, and as he saw that God gave him acceptance and success, he went to the work with his usual cheerfulness and delight.

The following letters, written about the time that he began to preach, to the sister of the lady to whom he was afterwards married, will illustrate the state of his religious experience at that period, and also shew the feelings with which he regarded the great work of preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ:—

"Sheffield, October 15th, 1842.

"My dear Miss Harrison,

"I write to inform you that I am very well, and happy in the love of God. Though I shall not be present with you at Eckington to-morrow, in body, I shall be in mind. I have to go to Cherrytree Hill in the afternoon: the service commences at three o'clock. Remember me at the Throne of Grace. My inability, my ignorance, my weakness are ever before me. Who is sufficient for these things? I expect being there in the evening also. The Lord help unworthy, unprofitable me. When I think of the importance of the work; that it has reference to Eternity; that the secrets of all hearts shall be revealed; and that I must soon render up my account to God; I feel mine to be a responsible situation. The Lord has been better to me than my doubts and fears. In God I will trust by Divine Grace, till I sicken and

die. If we to the end endure the cross, we shall wear the crown. Pray for me. Farewell.

"Your affectionate friend,

(Signed) "GEORGE MILLS."

"Sheffield, November 22nd, 1842.

"My dear Miss Harrison,

"I received yours on 17th, and am glad to know that you are growing in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. With you, I am thankful to God for his goodness to me, who am less than the least of all his mercies. I still feel Christ precious to my soul; I am happy in God's forgiving love. Though absent in body, I will meet you at the Throne of Divine Grace; for our heavenly Father can supply all our wants, out of the riches of his fulness treasured up in Christ our Lord.

"I often think what a dream this life is, what shadows are the objects of sense. All the glories of mortality will be nothing in your view and mine, when we come to the awful hour of death, when we leave this world, and appear before God in Zion. I do pray that you and I may be clothed with the garment of salvation, and that we may be Christians indeed and of a truth. I find that the Christian's life is a warfare; we now are called to fight, to run the race with patience. Respecting this trying to exhort, I often am severely tempted. Continue to bear me up at the Throne of Grace. I hope to meet you at last, in the shining realms of love and unmingled bliss, where we shall be crowned with joy and ever blooming youth. "I remain, your affectionate friend,

(Signed) "GEORGE MILLS."

The following is an extract from a letter written by him to the gentleman who afterwards became his brother-in-law, Mr. Mellers, Jun.:—

"Sheffield, July 28th, 1844.

"My dear Brother,

"I have had to try to preach at Stanley Street Chapel this morning, and I trust I have not labored in vain, nor spent my strength for nought. * * * *

"In a little while, and we shall meet, never to know a parting. Soon will the wilderness be exchanged for Canaan, the militant resign to the triumphant state. Yes, ere long the conflicts of this mortal life will be ended, and I trust you and yours, unworthy me and mine shall through the shed blood of the Lamb, rise to "fairer worlds on high," and join in the anthem of the bloodwashed throng which shall be sung for ever. "I remain, your affectionate Brother,

(Signed) "GEORGE MILLS."

He writes to Mrs. Harrison thus:—

"Sheffield, June 27th, 1848.

"My dear Mother,

"We hope this will find you and all well, as we are at present: to God be all the praise. We had a high day yesterday. The lovefeast was a refreshing season. I had to preach at Stanley Street Chapel at night. Text, "These are they that have come out of great tribulation, &c., &c." I felt my elder Brother stood at my right hand. When we got home from the lovefeast, we both wept when we thought of our separation here; but though we parted, bye and bye we we shall meet in that better land, never, no never to be parted.

again. O yes, my dear Mother, parents and children in Heaven shall meet, shall meet to part no more. I am sure our home is like a little heaven below. We only want trade to revive, and I fear lest we should then desire to build a Tabernacle, and call earth our home for ever.

"Ever your unworthy yet very affectionate Son,

(Signed) "GEORGE MILLS."

He used to tell an amusing incident in connection with the preparation of his first sermons. It appears that some more experienced preacher had been impressing upon him the propriety of writing his sermons, or at least writing copious outlines of them. He took the advice, and wrote the outline of the sermon he intended to preach on the next occasion. When the service came, and the first part of it was gone through, he gave out the text as usual, and tried to commence, but could not think of the introduction to the sermon which he had written. He then placed the manuscript before him and commenced; but after stammering out the first few words, he again came to a stand. The congregation were of course greatly surprised. However, he had presence of mind sufficient to remove the paper from before him, and trust to the spontaneous promptings of his own mind. Then the service went on smoothly enough to its close, *to the gratification* and benefit of the people. He

seldom afterwards wrote a single line on any text, but thought out his sermons in the week, and then went to the pulpit, trusting to the spontaneous flow of his own thought and language, and to the assistance of the Spirit of God. We do not advise young preachers to "go and do likewise" in the preparation of their sermons; for we are persuaded that under all, except extraordinary circumstances, carefully written sermons will be most effective, eloquent, and acceptable. We cannot forget the proverbial utterance of the immortal Bacon, "Writing makes a correct man."

Mr. Mills became a very popular preacher, was much followed by the people, and was used by God as the instrument in the conversion of many souls. One instance of this, which he regarded as the crowning success of his life, is worthy of record here. It was during a course of special services which were being held by the Rev. James Caughey, in Mount Tabor Chapel. Mr. Mills was requested to preach on the Monday evening, one of the Sunday School anniversary sermons. He did so, the Rev. James Caughey being in the pulpit with him. All fear of man was taken away from him, he preached with great power and acceptance, and that night about seventy souls were saved.

But his *prayers* were even more powerful than

his sermons. When the Rev. James Caughey was conducting a series of revival services in various buildings in Sheffield, Mr. Mills labored most strenuously with him in almost every service, generally offering the opening prayer; and there were many who came to the services, not attracted solely by the fame of the Transatlantic preacher, but to hear Mr. Mills pray. His prayers both as to matter and manner were rich and eloquent; sometimes subduing and softening till as one expressed it, "Heaven seemed to be brought down to earth;" and sometimes fiery and terrible, till as another who has frequently heard him expressively said, "The very flesh seemed to crawl upon one's bones." His congregations were often irresistibly bowed before the Lord under the influence of his fervid supplications.

Our friend did not confine his exhortations to the pulpit. He was in the habit of conversing with his friends upon religious subjects, even upon occasions when business had called them together. He also reproved sin whenever he had the opportunity, and he did it with such suavity and seriousness that the happiest results often accrued. Thus —one day, some six or eight months before his decease, he was waiting in a shop for a short time. *While there,* an old man who was being attended

to, twice used a common, but profane expletive, to add emphasis to his sentences. Mr. Mills sat for a few moments in silence, and then impressively addressed the old man, "What a mercy it is my friend, that neither you nor I, nor any one here, are damned yet. Do you know what that word means? It means eternal separation from God and Heaven, and to be shut up in Hell for ever. What a mercy that God has not damned any of us yet." The old man listened, said nothing, and left the shop—but shortly after he came in again, and said to Mr. Mills, "Will you shake hands with me?" They shook hands, and he went on, "I have been swearing now for forty years, and you are the first that ever reproved me for it. I am much obliged to you, and by God's help, I will never swear again as long as I live."

CHAPTER V.

BUSINESS.

It appears to be matter of doubt with many, as to whether it be possible diligently to attend to business, and yet maintain a healthy and progressive spiritual life, and discharge faithfully the duties imposed by the Church of Christ. Mr. Mills has by his own practice for many years, presented his testimony as to the possibility of subserving the interests both of the temporal and spiritual, both of business and the Church. *He made the best of both worlds.* Raising himself by untiring industry, indomitable perseverance, and strict integrity, from a position of obscurity; he yet provided for the future life by earnest attention to spiritual matters, and a zealous devotion to the interests of the Church. He was "not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord." And there really is no reason why the two should not go hand in hand. Yea more, why each should not rather assist the other. Religion never was intended to be cloistral. We value far above all the piety of

monkery, the practice of religion which appears in everyday life. We think that those virtues which grow in some men, notwithstanding the friction of the market place and the crowd, are more to be admired than those which flourish only with a sickly life, because secluded by monastic walls, from the light and air of Heaven. The Divine command is, "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven." Christ Jesus himself was no ascetic.

Mr. Mills' life was eminently a business life. From the time that he was twelve years old, he was engaged in active business pursuits. As has been already stated, his father was in the leather dressing trade; as, in fact, had been his predecessors for several generations; and was one of the cleverest men in the trade. The youth therefore commenced life under somewhat favorable circumstances, and rapidly advanced in efficiency as a workman, till he rivalled his parent in the productions of his handicraft. But the thought of being an ordinary working man all his life, did not suit his ideas; and so when he reached manhood he began to think seriously of entering into business on his own account. But the opportunity did not readily present itself. Just before he did actually

commence business, he went to Liverpool to a situation which offered him much worldly advantage, and which might perhaps have helped him on in the direction to which his thoughts and desires tended. But his extreme conscientiousness interfered with any such developement, as will be seen by the following incident. He had been there about five months, and had given to his employer unqualified satisfaction. But there was not sufficient work upon the place to keep him fully employed; and one day he said to his master, "You do not receive skins enough to engage me all my time, and I cannot take your money unless I earn it."

He soon after returned to Sheffield, and commenced business when about twenty-five years of age, continuing in the midst of it till the time of his decease, a period of about nineteen years. He began by occupying a part of his father's premises, in Neepsend Lane. His commencement was in a very small way, on account of his possessing little or no capital. At the end of the first year he found himself even worse off than when he commenced; but this so far from discouraging him, only caused him to dedicate himself more fully to God. He had learnt well the blessedness of fulfilling the Divine exhortation, "Commit thy works

unto the Lord, and thy thoughts shall be established." From that time forth he prospered steadily; subsequently occupying the whole of his father's premises in Neepsend Lane, then establishing himself in premises at the Twelve o'Clock, Sheffield, and at Chesterfield; and ultimately building a yard at Neepsend, called the "Neepsend Leather Works," which has grown larger from year to year, till it has assumed its present proportions.

From the very first he was held in high estimation by his business connections. They could not but see and appreciate, the energy, perseverance, and uprightness which characterized him. They therefore respected, and trusted him. An instance of this, which occurred in the early part of his career, will prove it. A highly respectable firm, from whom he had purchased small quantities of oil at various times, offered him a large quantity upon the most advantageous conditions, the same in fact as they gave to their best and wealthiest customers. The kind offer was accepted, the bills which were drawn upon him were duly honored, and to the last he continued to do business with that firm, and became the largest consumer they had.

For many of the earlier years of his business

career he worked with his own hands at the trade; and being very strong and robust, and possessing a thorough practical knowledge of his work, he did more work himself than any man he could get. He often began at four o'clock a.m., and even earlier; and worked on till eight, and sometimes ten o'clock p.m., so anxious was he to meet his responsibilities and get on in the world. One day a tradesman in a good position called at his yard, for the purpose of arranging some business with him, and saw him in the yard, dressed as an ordinary leather dresser is dressed at his work. Not knowing Mr. Mills, he called out to him, "Here my man, is Mr. Mills about?"

"Yes," said the person interrogated, "I believe he is here, sir: what is your pleasure?"

And the gentleman seemed to be not a little surprised that Mr. Mills the master should work, and be dressed like an ordinary workman. But as there was nothing to be ashamed of in honest toil, Mr. Mills was not ashamed of it; and even in the days when he had no longer to work with his hands, he would have thought nothing of taking up any piece of work in his yard, and shewing the men how it ought to be done, if they did not seem to know.

For several years he turned his attention almost

entirely to the leather dressing department of his trade, but in course of time circumstances occurred which determined him to go into the fellmongering business as well. For some time he met with much bitter opposition from others engaged in the same trade; but by his uniform straightforwardness, affable demeanour, and prompt payments, he not only surmounted all opposition, but gained the esteem of those with whom he had dealings. This is fully manifested by the fact that in 1856, the butchers of Sheffield and Rotherham presented him with a superb service of silver, in token, as they said at the time, of their high appreciation of his business tact, and unblemished integrity. And since he has been dead, they have expressed their unfeigned grief at his loss.

As a business man, his credit stood very high in every respect; and even when the disastrous Bradfield flood came, and swept away thousands of pounds worth of his property, his credit was not shaken. In matters of business he was prompt and decisive, never dallying over any transaction, but at once firmly stating his terms either of purchase or sale, and leaving it with the other party to accept or refuse his offers. In this way his transactions were rapidly, though not precipitately closed. In money matters it is sufficient to say,

that it was not his fault if people had to come for their money twice. His correspondents reposed unlimited confidence in him, often writing for goods and allowing him to fix his own price; and in other ways shewing that they considered their interests quite safe in his keeping. And there was no wonder, for when a man during a course of years cherishes and carries out the "golden rule," men will trust him. The following letter will shew his desire for fair and honest dealing. He wrote it with his own hand, only a few days before his death:—

"Sheffield, August 26th, 1865.

Dear Sirs,

"I find on my return, that you have had to complain of some lamb pelts, you have had in my absence at the sea side. I shall endeavour that the same complaints may not occur *again*, as in all business transactions, I only wish either myself or my employés, to do to others as I would wish them to do to me. Let the principle be carried out world wide, and there would be fewer complaints. Whatever is wrong, I will see you righted. Drop me a line.

"Yours truly,

"Messrs. * * * " (Signed) "G. Mills.

But though so thoroughly a man of business, he was at the same time an earnest Christian. His thoughts could be turned at any moment from the weighty matters of pounds, shillings and pence

to the still weightier ones of religion. He often turned commercial interviews to spiritual profit. We shall record in another place how he read hymns and religious poems, to a party of gentlemen who were gathered on the most important business at his house. And we will record now an instance which will shew most unmistakeably the rich and sincere character of the man. One day a few weeks before his decease, he was waited upon by a gentleman, a stranger, from a distant part of the country; but before business arrangements were well over, he began to talk of the things of the heavenly kingdom; and finding in the stranger a friend in Christ, they together held the most joyous and impressive communion with regard to the world to come. The stranger friend was deeply moved by the interview; and we are led to wish that Christians always lived at such an elevation above the things of this life, that their unclouded gaze might be at any moment fixed upon the solemn realities of the future world.

His extensive business ultimately made him the employer of a large number of men, and his faithfulness and generosity in his dealings with them, together with his anxious solicitude as to their morals and their souls, caused him to be greatly beloved by them. He several times offered pecuniary

rewards for morality and sobriety. Those rewards will doubtless be greatly valued. In fact, one man to whom he thus presented a watch, and who has since commenced business on his own account, has declared that were he to become a rich man, he would never wear any other watch than that presented to him by his dead master. Having heard one day that one of his young men was going astray, being led into sin by evil companions, he called him into his private office, and for nearly three hours was kindly warning him of the evil of his way, and exhorting him to turn his feet into the way of life. That interview resulted in the salvation of that young man, and he is now a member of the Christian Church.

The men have declared that they have lost the best master in the trade; and some of them would almost have laid down their lives for him, so greatly did they appreciate his kind words and kind deeds. Some few years since his men presented him with a valuable piece of silver plate in token of their high esteem; but a richer offering to his memory, were the tears which strong sons of toil shed over his bier, upon the funeral day.

In concluding this chapter it may be well to give a brief account of his characteristics as a public man. He has been for several years past a man

of mark in the town of Sheffield. In 1858, so honorable was the character he bore, and the position he had attained, that he was elected by the Park Ward as one of its representatives in the Town Council. He was re-elected in 1861, and again in 1864. The circumstances of his last election were peculiar, and shew the confidence which men had in him as a public man. He had no desire to be re-elected, determined he would not go to the election meetings, and did not canvass for a single vote. Councillor Woodcock, however, his honorable colleague, canvassed for him conjointly with himself, determined if possible to carry him into the Council, as his co-representative. The result of the election was, that Mr. Mills was returned, polling only a few votes less than Mr. Woodcock.

He was made a member of the Town Improvement Commission, and continued as such till the dissolution of that body.

In the years 1862-3 he was elected as one of the Guardians of the Poor, by an overwhelming majority, and was as kind and generous to the poor, especially the deserving poor, as the Poor Laws would allow. In fact, when he could not stretch the Poor Laws to meet the necessities of cases which were brought before him, he loosed the

strings of his own purse, and ministered to their need.

In all his public offices he was guided by the same principles of courage, integrity and honor, which characterized him in all the other relations of life. His voice was not often heard in the Council, but when he did feel constrained to speak, he always advocated the right. Fearless of the frown of man, and desiring, more than all, the praise of God, he conscientiously discharged his duty to the public. In him the town of Sheffield has lost an honest and disinterested friend. The great esteem in which he was held, was testified by the presence of so large a number of Aldermen, Councillors, and gentlemen of note in the town, upon the occasion of his funeral.

He is dead—and the sentiments expressed by his business correspondents are most heartily sympathized with, by almost all with whom he came in contact, "He will be a missed man in many circles, for a freer and kinder-hearted man we never met with, or one who gained more respect wherever he went."

CHAPTER VI.

HOME.

WHAT a man is at home, he is really. "You must live with a man to know him," is a trite saying, but a true one. Home life gives the key to a man's true character. If therefore criticism would say, that in various descriptions of the character of the deceased, we have overdrawn the picture; that our love for, and veneration of, the man, have led us to look for the smallest traces of goodness, that we might magnify them into qualities and characteristics; we refer with confidence to his home life, feeling sure that the picture presented thereby, will abundantly disprove any such insinuation. If we have said that he was of a cheerful disposition, nowhere was it seen more than in his own beloved home. If that he was addicted to harmony and concord, the peace of his family, unruffled by even a passing gleam of illtemper, will abundantly bear out the statement. And if, that he was deeply religious, the constant and

regular visitation of the Altar of the Household will prove it.

In his father's house, he was habited to scenes of true love, and undisturbed conjugal, parental, and filial confidence; for like Zechariah and Elizabeth, his parents walked together in all the commandments of the Lord. And when he was privileged to establish a separate home, and to gather around him a household, the "home affections" so often sung by the poets, but not so often realized fully by ordinary mortals, dwelt richly in its midst. We never remember having seen a home where repose and concord prevailed more uninterruptedly.

He remained under his father's roof until he was about twenty-seven years of age, and was then united to Mary, the second daughter of Mr. W. D. Harrison, of Eckington, the bereaved one who now so deeply mourns his loss. For several years before they were united, he had paid his addresses to her, and was no recreant, inattentive lover. The young lady resided with her parents at Eckington, but the distance of her home from Sheffield formed no obstacle in the way of his attentions. In fact the usual perseverance and determination of his character, as well as his earnest devotion to the service of God, shewed themselves in the love-passages of his life. There is, and has been for many

years, a small Church at Eckington, in connection with the Circuit to which Mr. Mills belonged (the Surrey Street Circuit); and to this Church he was made the channel of much blessing in his visits. When he visited Eckington on the Sabbath, he generally arrived there from Sheffield, having walked the whole distance of seven miles, in time for the 7.0 a.m. prayer meeting; and then engaged himself in the Sabbath School; very often preaching also morning and evening. His frequent visits to Eckington are remembered with much delight by many to this day; and doubtless many will have cause to remember them through the ceaseless roll of eternal ages.

Mrs. Mills was of much the same energetic, persevering and determined spirit as her lamented husband; and most heartily co-operated in every scheme which promised advancement and prosperity. Theirs was a union of soul, and consequently true affection and undisturbed confidence existed between them.

They were blessed with one daughter, and for her Mr. Mills cherished affection the most pure and indulgent. His letters to her while at school, of which we subjoin copies of a few, will evince the deep anxiety he experienced for her present and eternal welfare.

"Sheffield, May 14th, 1865.

"My dear Daughter,

"We duly received your loving epistle. Trust you are well and happy. The remark you made about the seal pleased us much—'The all-seeing eye.' We pray that you may ever remember 'Thou God seest me.' If you do, the Lord whom we trust you love will be the guide of your youth, and through life. The Lord says to you, 'I will shew thee the path of life; in my presence there is fulness of joy, at my right hand there are pleasures for evermore.' I am not very well, so staying at home; your mamma and aunt are gone to Chapel. I wish you to commit to memory the enclosed poetry, termed, 'Ready for duty.' Then return it, I want to give it to a party. Your mamma and aunt join me in very best love to you, daily praying that God may bless and save you and us with all the powers of an endless life. Kind regards to all at school. When I come to Chesterfield will try to see you.

"Remaining your affectionate father,

(Signed) "GEORGE MILLS."

"Sheffield, May 29th, 1865.

"My dear Daughter,

"I drop you a line with pleasure to say that I am much better in health. We trust you are well and happy. I preached at Mount Zion Chapel, Rotherham, last night, to a large congregation. It was their Missionary Anniversary. I have to take the chair at a large dinner party in Sheffield, this afternoon at five p.m. Your mamma is pretty well. Our garden now looks very beautiful. I have no doubt your place at school also looks delightful. I trust you are a very good

girl. Be affectionate and kind to all, then you will be esteemed and loved by all. I am sure we are much pleased with the progress you have made while with the Misses P. and W. 'I am sure you will try to learn, and I am certain those ladies will do all in their power to make you accomplished. I went out several times last week fishing—caught but little—best of all think I caught better health. I think that a fish equal to, if not better than salmon. At the family altar we daily pray that God may have you my dear Anne under his protection. All the family joins your dear mamma and myself in very best wishes for your present and eternal welfare. The text I spoke from last night you will find in Jeremiah, 12th chapter 5th verse, 'Then how wilt thou do in the swellings of Jordan?' Shall be glad to hear from you.

"Ever remaining your affectionate father,

(Signed) "GEORGE MILLS."

For some time past, his younger sister has resided under his roof, and has received from him the same kind consideration, with which he invariably treated his relatives, and most intimate friends.

For some years also, Mr. A. Redman, a young gentleman who has taken an active part in the management of the business, and in whom Mr. Mills reposed almost unlimited confidence, has formed a member of his family circle, and has been treated by him always as a most beloved son. On the attainment of his majority a few months since, Mr. Mills presented him with a valuable gold

watch, with chain and appendages, as a mark of the generous esteem in which he held him.

He was in his house, a man of right royal disposition. A king's heart dwelt within his bosom. His princely hospitality was extended to nearly all comers. Friends always found in him a most cheerful host; and even acquaintances of a recent date felt the instant ease of familiarity, when once within the charmed precincts of his hearth. Well does the writer remember how heartily and kindly he was welcomed to his generous friendship, when as a stranger and comparatively unknown, he first set foot in Sheffield, and began to minister in holy things at Surrey Street Chapel.

It was once remarked by a keen observer of human nature, that it was easier to "weep with them that weep," than to "rejoice with them that rejoice;" because the natural egoism of the human heart would not allow men to rejoice in the prosperity of others; especially when no corresponding cause of rejoicing fell to their own lot. But this was not the case with our friend. He could sincerely rejoice with others. The naturally noble disposition which dwelt in him, refined and elevated by the unselfish doctrine of Christianity, caused him to be glad with his friends in every moment of gladness, and to exult over every occa-

sion of exultation. Had he lived in the days when the man left his ninety and nine sheep in the wilderness, and went after the one he had lost; none of the man's friends would have rejoiced more heartily than he over its recovery. And the woman who had lost her piece of silver, could have had no heartier congratulation over its discovery than that which would have been given by our friend. But the smile upon his face though often there, was no fixture; for he could "weep with them that weep." And no one doubted those tears when they saw them. They were evidently the outgushings of a manly yet tender nature. How much of true pathos and hearty condolence, there is in the following letter, written by him to a friend of many years, upon the death of his father:—

"Sheffield, December 27th, 1868.

"My dear Friend,

"I duly received your letter this morning. I deeply sympathize with you and your family, in the great loss you have sustained—in the death of your honored and lamented father. But you do not sorrow as those without hope. It must afford great consolation to you all, that your dear parent—while you are looking with deep sorrow upon the lifeless clay—now stands before the Throne of the Eternal, and shall have part in the first resurrection, and will sing with all the blest, 'O death, where is thy sting? O grave,

where is thy victory? Thanks be unto God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.' May God bless and support your beloved mother, while passing through this severe trial. Let the hope cheer your dear mother—though severed, 'tis not for long; a few more storms at most will land her on the heavenly coast, to be reunited with her dear partner. This visitation seems to say, 'Set thy house in order, for thou shalt die and not live.' I am very poorly. Hope to go to Eckington to-morrow. Shall be very glad to see you on your return. Please give my kind regards to your dear mother and all the family. May God bless and sustain you all in this great affliction, and grant, that the families unbroken, may meet at last in the heavenly land, and free from pain God's glories sing.

"Your's very truly,

(Signed) "GEORGE MILLS."

In his home, he was not only the tender husband, the loving father, the indulgent friend, the cheerful host, but he was also the true Christian. Regularly was the family altar surrounded, while he morning and evening as the priest of the household, first read a portion of the sacred oracles, and then poured out the sacrifices of praise and prayer. And no formal service was it he rendered, for from his heart evidently did his thanksgivings and supplications proceed. Thoughts the most sublime and language the most eloquent escaped his lips when in the exercise of family devotion; and since his decease many seasons of remarkable heart-

pourings, have recalled themselves to the sorrowful hearts of the mourners. And it mattered not who stayed beneath the shelter of his hospitable roof, the habit was never broken into. Visited by numerous gentlemen with whom he had business relations, he always gave them gracefully to understand that for years, the habit of devotion had been cherished by his family, and invited them most cordially to join in the worship. Generally his guests were well pleased to bow the knee when he did.

"Shew piety at home" was the injunction of an inspired apostle to all who name the name of our Lord Jesus Christ; and to those Christians who, having received Christ themselves, desire that their families may become partakers of the same grace, we say, "Do in this matter of family worship what Mr. Mills did!" If the altar of worship is not yet erected in your household, build it at once! And when once reared, let nothing interfere to prevent its being regularly and devoutly approached! Remember how that Job "sent and sanctified his children, when the days of their feasting were gone about, and rose up early in the morning, and offered burnt offerings according to the number of them all; for Job said, It may be that my sons have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts. Thus did *Job continually*."

CHAPTER VII.

SORROW.

"SHALL we receive good at the hands of the Lord, and not evil?" Assuredly not, for "whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth."

It is not therefore to be wondered at that our friend was sometimes the subject of affliction and sorrow. Undoubtedly it was well that it was so, for when a man enjoys unalloyed prosperity, he is greatly tempted to regard himself as his own Providence, to the exclusion of the Divine; and to say with respect to his worldly advancement and fortune "Behold this great Babylon which I have builded." Our deceased friend was in no danger of any such impiety; for not only had he the fear of God before his eyes, but he also had frequent warnings that his tabernacle was not to stand for ever. He was therefore led to look up to the "ROCK" which was higher than himself, and ultimately he found that,

"The path of sorrow, and that path alone,
Leads to the land where sorrow is unknown;
No traveller ever reached that blest abode,
Who found not thorns and briars in the road."

In 1855 the whole family was thrown into a state of alarm and grief, by the death of Mr. W. D. Harrison of Eckington, the revered father of Mrs. Mills. The record of his death is thus given by his biographer the Rev. Ed. Wright, who quotes from a letter: "He left home on Monday, February 5th, got to Kirton Lindsey in Lincolnshire that night, rose in good health on Monday morning, and about eight o'clock while in the street dropped down and died in a moment." The shock was one which affected the whole family deeply, but there was the consolation in connection with it, that for more than fifty years he had been living in preparation for the solemn change.

But the tears of mourning friends were not long dried, before their channels were again opened. In 1857 the widow of Mr. Harrison was called to change worlds. Not suddenly but by lingering sickness. She was seized with her last affliction in March, and continued to grow worse, till the time of her decease, which was in April, 1857. But the consolations of God were not small with

her. The Saviour whom she had followed in her pilgrimage was with her till the closing scene.

Ever since he became acquainted with her, Mr. Mills had cherished for her a sincere regard, and when that acquaintanceship ripened into relationship, the regard he had always felt for her became yet more deep and strong. The following letter written by him to Mrs. Harrison a short time before her death, will shew to some extent the feelings with which he regarded her:—

"Sheffield, March 25th, 1857.

"My dear Mother,

"This comes with our kind love to you. Sorry to find that you are so poorly and trust that by this time you are much improved. Mary would have written but she is at Mrs. Salmon's to-day preparing mourning. My Grandmother Mills last Sunday week fell asleep in Jesus—at Leeds. Ann is much better—Mary well—myself only middling. All being well we intend to come on Saturday evening. You must prepare to come back with us; I want you under the roof of my new habitation. Well now I am glad to hear such news about poor Eckington. Zion must become a praise in the earth. Pray that poor me may be enabled to preach the Gospel of the blessed God—that I may preach Jesus and the Resurrection; and at last with you all cry in death, 'Behold, behold the Lamb.' I anticipate the day when the whole family shall be in Heaven, no wanderer lost. Give my kind regards to the friends, and tell them that if we are to have a high day on Sunday, we must pray for it and believe for it. Farewell!

"I am, your son affectionately,

(Signed) "George Mills."

Mr. Mills was privileged to be often with Mrs. Harrison in her last sickness, and doubtless found much spiritual benefit from her wise and solemn counsels; and had his faith strengthened by her triumphant assurance of final victory. He was with her when she was approaching the stream, and she said to him, "There will be light in the valley." At one o'clock in the morning he said to her, "Mother, Christ now is precious?" And she replied with marked emphasis, "Yes, precious." Again he remarked as she was rapidly sinking, "Mother, you appear to have run the race and fought the fight." "Yes," she said as with the last effort of expiring nature, "and won the victory." While they still stood round the death couch her soul rallied, and she slowly repeated "The Lord is my light and my salva——" But again rallying, with her dying breath she repeated three times "My Jesus hath done all things well."

In 1860 his own beloved mother quitted the Church militant, for the Church triumphant. This was indeed a heavy trial to Mr. Mills, for the affection with which he regarded her, was no ordinary filial affection. Her prayers had been offered for him from his earliest days; her tender ear had listened to the recital of his joys and sorrows; and her tender heart had deeply sympathized with him

in every gladness or grief. It is not wonderful therefore that his whole soul should cling to her with intense devotion. When it came to the last struggle, he had the privilege of being present with her. During her lifetime she had had a great dread at the thought of death, her feelings sympathizing largely with the poet when he says—

"Dark river of death that is flowing
Between the bright City and me;
Thou boundest the path I am going:
O, how shall I pass over thee?"

But when death came there was little or none of the dread she imagined she would surely experience; and when her medical attendant declared that there was no hope of her recovery, she exclaimed—

"Other refuge have I none;
Hangs my helpless soul on thee;
Leave, ah, leave me not alone,
Still support and comfort me."

Her biographer, the Rev. Thomas Hacking, says, "Her family gathered round to see her departure. She opened her eyes, looked round upon them all, and closed them on this world for ever. Ere her parting spirit laid down its cumbrous load of clay, her son George said 'It is victory through the Blood of the Lamb. Mother, speak if you can.' She moved her lips, but could not speak. 'Raise

your arm if it is so.' She lifted her arm, nodded several times, and then her emancipated spirit returned to God who gave it."

On Christmas Day last, also, he was called to part with his only brother. During his illness, he was intensely anxious for his welfare, both of body and soul—sent his own physician to attend him, and often visited his sick chamber himself for prayer and religious converse. We well remember how that for nearly the whole of one night Mr. Mills knelt in his bedchamber and pleaded with God, for the salvation of his brother's soul; and would not rise from his knees till he had the assurance from on high that all would be well with his brother. Doubtless he was saved, but so as by fire; and the thought that he should meet him again in the realms of glory comforted the heart of Mr. Mills. Yet he could not but mourn his departure deeply—and took home to his heart the keen but salutary lesson, which God evidently desired to teach him by it. Said he when his brother was dead, "It seems to say to *me*, 'Set *thine* house in order, for *thou* shalt die and not live.'"

These sorrowful bereavements doubtless deeply affected Mr. Mills' mind, and through his mind his health. But these were not all. He was called to pass through the furnace of affliction himself

many times. Originally he was blessed with a vigorous and sound constitution, or he would not have been able to labor so incessantly at his heavy toil, as he was wont to do in his early life.

But in 1848 when the cholera raged so dreadfully in Sheffield, he was one of its stricken victims. During the course of the fearful malady, he was attended by the late Dr. Turton, who not only as a medical adviser but as a friend, did all in his power to stay the fatal progress of the epidemic in his patient. But all efforts seemed to avail nothing, and at one time he was thought to be dead. However, notwithstanding the forebodings of his friends, he rallied and lived on. The end of his life was not yet answered. God did not let him die. There was work for him to do yet.

But from the effects of that attack of cholera, he never entirely recovered. When any special anxiety pressed upon his mind; or any more than usually hard work engaged his attention; or any great excitement roused him; he was almost sure to suffer by an attack of illness and prostration, which often awakened the most anxious solicitude on the part of his friends, and doubtless yet further tended to undermine his constitution.

At another time he was returning in his carriage from a preaching appointment at Wales, and the

horse fell, having gathered a stone in his foot, and Mr. Mills was thrown out of the carriage with great violence. His arm was broken, and he was otherwise severely injured by the fall. For several hours he was unconscious, and for several weeks obliged to remain at home an invalid.

But there came a most terrible calamity upon the town of Sheffield in the shape of the Bradfield flood, on Friday night, March 11, 1864, and this perhaps more than anything tended to lay the strong man low. When the fierce waters, lashed into fury by the gales of March, had burst their feeble barriers, and swept with seething impetuosity down the valley of the Loxley, carrying with them habitations and their human slumberers, and merging all in one common destruction; the flood deluged and desolated Mr. Mills' works at Neepsend, undoing in one night the labor of years. Two men went up to his residence in Norfolk Road, in the early morning, and when they had awaked the sleeping household, and revealed the fearful news, the first question our friend asked was "Are there any lives lost?" His calmness under the dreadful circumstances was remarkable. He even prayed with the whole household as usual, before he left the house. Then wading through mud and water, along the almost impassable streets, past rows of

houses tottering ready to fall, and by the places where men were seeking for the dead, he arrived at his own works and gazed upon a scene of the most painful desolation. His plant and machinery were buried beneath mud and sand. His goods were floating about in the subsided river, or damaged in the buildings in the yard. Debris of every description covered the whole place. And worst of all, the bodies of the dead, naked and bruised, were found there. These things gave him a shock, which in spite of his apparent calmness, deeply affected his health and happiness. But in the midst of such desolation, he was devoutly thankful that his life, and the lives of others connected with him were spared, and sought balm for his wounded heart in the immediate performance of good deeds. With a lavish hand he distributed money, food, and clothes, according to the necessities of his neighbours whose houses had been deluged by the remorseless flood; and for many days his warehouse was a kind of repository of second-hand clothes, which were sent to him, from all parts of the country; and which he dispensed to the needy with an unsparing liberality. He sang at the close of that dreadful day, the beauteous hymn, commencing

"Abide with me: fast falls the eventide."

But as day after day passed on, and news came in thick and fast, of the destruction of life and property, he felt more and more fully the fearful nature of the disaster. But his confidence in God was unshaken; and the following letter, addressed by himself to the writer of this memoir, in answer to a letter of condolence he had written him, will shew the state of mind he cherished, even under such circumstances:—

"Sheffield, May 28th, 1864.

"Dear Sir,

"Please accept our thanks for the kind letter of sympathy we have received from you. The late calamity has not shaken my confidence in God. He will do all things well—though it is a severe trial. My loss is about £7000. What the Water Company will do as yet I know not, or when the matter will be settled. I feel thankful myself and family are spared. In health I am much improved. Mrs. Mills and my daughter are both well—she is at school. We should have been glad to have seen you when in Sheffield. Mrs. Mills unites with me in kind regards to you.

"Yours truly,

(Signed) "George Mills."

More fell the victims of that terrible flood than were swept out of their beds, by the cruel waters on that fatal 11th of March. Many contracted illnesses by exposure and grief, which have sooner or later carried them to their graves; and some by

the intense anxiety, and excitement resulting from heavy losses of property, have had the spring of life sapped of its vitality and power. Our departed friend was among the latter. He never recovered fully from the shock caused to his mental and physical being, and now, gone, so far as his body is concerned, to that "bourne whence no traveller returns," his spirit dwells in that place where there are

> "No rude alarms of raging foes,
> No cares to break the long repose;
> No midnight shade, no clouded sun,
> But sacred, high, eternal noon."

In Heaven thank God,

> "No more fatigues, no more distress,
> Nor sin nor hell shall reach the place;
> No groans shall mingle with the songs
> Which warble from immortal tongues."

The path of sorrow was to him the path of purification. The furnace of affliction acted upon him as the flame acts upon the gold. From the fire he came purged from dross, and shining with richer lustre, and now in Heaven we doubt not, he shines with the pure brightness of celestial glory.

CHAPTER VIII.

CLOSING SCENES.

It is often the case that men have a presentiment of the close of life—an impression that the end is near. Like a good angel sent to warn them of what is soon to come to pass, if the voice be listened to, it may result in a happy preparation for future bliss. So it was with the subject of this memoir. Throughout the whole of his life more or less, the thought of an early departure seemed to be with him continually. In his prayers it manifested itself by his earnest supplications that when death came he might be prepared to meet it with joy. And in his public addresses it constantly met the hearers by his addressing them as though for the last time. He spoke often "as a dying man to dying men." The hymns which he delighted to sing treated of death and eternity, such as—

"The great archangel's trump shall sound," &c.;

and that fine hymn of Martin Luther's, which was sung in the Parish Church on the occasion of the

funeral sermon preached there when the Prince Consort died—

"Great God, what do I see and hear?
The end of things created;
Behold the Judge of man appear,
On clouds of glory seated.
The trumpet sounds, the graves restore
The dead which they contained before.
Prepare my soul to meet him."

And that glad hymn which was sung over the grave of one of his relatives, and which made a deep impression on his mind—

"Again we lift our voice,
And shout our solemn joys.
Cause of highest raptures this,
Raptures that shall never fail,
See a soul escaped to bliss,
Keep the Christian festival."

And yet all this seriousness of thought and feeling existed conjointly with the cheerfulness and geniality which have been previously spoken of. While a serious Christian, he yet followed the advice of the celebrated Rev. W. Jay, of Bath; he carried a great deal of the boy with him through life. How can this be explained, except by the fact that

"Religion never was designed
To make our pleasures less."

During the last twelve months however, the impression seems to have deepened in intensity that his decease was not far distant. When Mr. Thos. Prince, the oldest local preacher on the Surrey Street Circuit plan, died in 1864, Mr. Mills saw that his own name was next, and remarked that very likely he would be the next to die. When in public meetings, he has often spoken of his willingness to do anything which lay in his power to help forward the cause of God, because he thought that he should not long have the opportunity. When he preached, it was from that solemn text, "Then how wilt thou do in the swellings of Jordan?" And he has said several times that he felt as though he could not preach from any other text. The last time he preached at Eckington, on July 30th, 1865, which was the last time he ever preached, it was from that text; and as he came down the street towards home, he said to his nephew who accompanied him, "Ah, I have been down this street many a time, but the last time will soon be here."

The impression may have been deepened by the oft-repeated attacks of illness which afflicted him for the last few years, and which were caused undoubtedly by the heavy pressure of his business and the constant anxiety devolving upon him. Dr.

J. C. Hall, his medical adviser, who was unwearied in his kind attentions to his patient in every sickness, and especially so in the final one, therefore advised him to seek change of air and scene, as the only course likely to result in a permanent restoration to health. His patient at last listened to his advice, and went to Bridlington, a place he had often visited before, and by a residence in which for a short time, he generally received great benefit. It was so on this occasion. His health seemed to improve wonderfully, and his vivacity of spirit was more marked than ordinary. He spent a large portion of every day upon the bosom of the sea, apparently delighting in the heaving of the waves, and the dashing of the spray, and after every such trip appeared much benefitted. On the first Sunday of his stay there, he attended the services at the Methodist Free Church (his own denomination); and again on the morning of the second Sunday. In the evening of that day he went to the Primitive Methodist Chapel, where they were holding a lovefeast, and took part in the meeting with great apparent delight and influence. He was published to preach on the next Sabbath at the Methodist Free Church, but was obliged to return to Sheffield on the previous Friday, as most *important business* had to engage his attention.

On the Saturday after his return, August 26, he attended to business, although somewhat unwell.

On the Sunday he attended the morning service at his own Chapel, but was too unwell to leave home in the evening. During the afternoon however, his daughter played and he sang some beautiful hymns, among the rest

"We sing of the realms of the blest," &c.,

and

"A home in Heaven;"

and it was remarked with what earnestness he sang.

On Monday he attended to business as usual, feeling much better.

On Tuesday evening, after business, he attended the Annual Circuit Tea Meeting at Surrey Street Chapel, and took the chair. He was almost always honored by being elected chairman of the public meetings held at Surrey Street. At that meeting he seemed to enjoy himself greatly. He was usually very happy and free at such meetings, but on that evening he seemed to surpass himself, making remarks between each speaker, and indulging in glad hopes of health and usefulness in the future.

On Wednesday he went to the opening of the Wakefield Exhibition, and appeared in excellent health and spirits.

On Thursday he entertained a party of gentlemen at his house, who had come on business of importance with which he was then engaged. After dinner, he read to them that hymn—

"God of my life! through all my days,
My grateful powers shall sound thy praise,
My song shall wake with opening light,
And cheer the dark and silent night."

And also a poem which he delighted to read to his friends, entitled "The dying boy." In fact he often repeated extracts from it, and sometimes caused his devoted wife sharp pangs of grief while he said to her, pointedly referring to himself—

"Mary, plant there some box or pine,
Something that lives in winter, and will be
A verdant offering to my memory;
And call it mine.

* * * * * *

O, at the time of prayer,
When you look round, and see a vacant seat,
You will not wait then for my coming feet,
You'll miss me there."

On Friday he went to the works, and while there he called his little niece to him, and wished her to recite a piece of poetry commencing

"Just over the river they beckon for me."

She did so, and when she had finished it he said, "Will you promise to teach that to my daughter *Ann when* I am dead?"

He had then to proceed to Manchester, to attend the skin auction. He started apparently in his usual health and spirits, but just as the train entered the Woodhead Tunnel, he was seized with a violent vomiting of blood, which continued to an alarming extent for some time. He still pressed on to Manchester, and went to the market. He could not stay there long however, and retired to the Market house. He there went to bed for a short time, and was supplied with ice, the only thing which stayed the sickness and gave him any relief. His friends tried to persuade him to call a physician there; but he thought that he had better return at once to Sheffield, and put himself under the care of his regular medical adviser. One of his friends, Mr. Smith of Colne, therefore determined to accompany him to Sheffield, and very kindly not only put himself to the inconvenience, but also travelled seventy miles out of his way, that he might see the invalid safely at home. When arrived in Sheffield, he drove to the house in Dixon Lane for Mrs. Mills. He seemed to think, as he was afterwards driving up South Street, Park, towards home, that his end was approaching, for he said to Mrs. Mills, "My dear, I think I am going to leave you." Of course, while deeply affected in her heart at this sad observation,

Mrs. Mills endeavoured to remove the impression from his mind, and to speak hopefully to him concerning the future. When he reached home, he was very cheerful, and turning round in his easy chair, he pointed from the window, to the beautiful Park which lay spread out before it, and said with a smile to Mr. Smith who was still with him, "That is our Park Mr. Smith, and if I am well enough in the morning, I will drive you round it myself."

He was then got to bed, his doctor was summoned, and under the influence of the medicine he gave him, he slept soundly, and had no more attacks of blood-vomiting during the night. In the morning however, the attack commenced again with great violence, utterly prostrating him and causing him great suffering. Other medical assistance was called in, a consultation was held, and he was told that there was just a chance for his recovery, if he had not a relapse. Hearing the doctors' words he said "Whether living or dying I am the Lord's."

Early in the morning of Saturday Mr. Alfred Redman had gone for Mrs. Mellors, Mrs. Mills' only sister, and when she arrived Mr. Mills told her that he thought the earthly house of his tabernacle was about to be dissolved, but said he "I

have a house above, not made with mortal hands, eternal in the Heavens."

"We know, by faith we know,
If this vile house of clay,
This tabernacle sink below,
In ruinous decay.
We have a house above
Not made with mortal hands,
And firm as our Redeemer's love,
That heavenly fabric stands."

Christ was very precious to him in those hours of languor and weakness, and he found much comfort in the words of that hymn he had so often sung before—

"We speak of the realms of the blest."

He praised God very fervently that he had sought religion in his youth, and said more than once, "The Lord is now the strength of my heart, and will be my portion for ever." When particularly languid and faint he said—

"I shall soon be revived with everduring bloom,
Saved from diseases and decline."

The writer of this memoir saw him in the afternoon of Saturday, and repeated words of consolation from the sacred treasury of truth; and then, though forbidden by the doctor to speak, he yet said "I am resting on the cleft rock." When the anxious desire was expressed that he might soon

recover he said "I am altogether in the Lord's hands." And when the Throne of Grace was petitioned that he might have grace and patience and resignation in the midst of his affliction, he most fervently ejaculated "Amen, Amen."

He seemed at that time to be much easier and expressed himself as somewhat better, but he was seized again during the evening. Of course each of these attacks prostrated him more and more, and left less hope of recovery. But during the night he continued to praise God in the same delightful strain, evidently enjoying a most happy frame of mind.

On Sunday morning about ten o'clock another relapse occurred, and he was very feeble but still very happy. When the beautiful summer breeze coming through the open window fanned his cheek, and refreshed him, he said again "I shall soon be revived with everduring bloom." He was strictly charged by the doctor not to talk, but the fulness of his heart could not always be restrained; and ever and anon he breathed short sentences of prayer, especially saying "The Lord bless thee, my dear wife, and protect thee." In the morning he could lie in bed no longer, and was laid upon the floor under the open window; and seemed to rest more peacefully there, although at about four

o'clock p.m. his friends thought that he was dying. In the evening he was visited by the Rev. John Guttridge, whose sweet sentences of prayer were afterwards referred to with great pleasure by the dying man.

At ten o'clock on Sunday night, he was lifted into bed again, and said,

"The voyage of life's at an end,
The mortal affliction is past,
The life that in Heaven they spend,
For ever and ever shall last."

"Yea, though I walk through the Valley of the Shadow of Death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me, thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."

It was evident early in the morning that he was drawing near the verge of Jordan, but with the greatest calmness, he repeated the poet's words,

"The chamber where the good man meets his fate
Is privileged above the common walk of virtuous life,
Close on the verge of Heaven."

His daughter brought him a beautiful flower she had plucked from the garden. He took it and blessed her, spoke of her Father in Heaven, and urged her to meet him there.

His friend Mr. Charlesworth came to the house early, and remained with him some time, coming again in the afternoon, and remaining then, till the painful scene was closed; and the one great

thing he noticed was, that though at the time Mr. Mills was seized with his death-sickness, he was immersed in business, and that of a most important character, yet on the Monday he never once mentioned it nor appeared to think of it, except in so far as his words to Mr. Widdowson and Mr. Redman implied it. He appeared to be entirely engrossed with the things of the world which was so rapidly approaching him.

When he saw Mr. Charlesworth he said "We have often sung together,

> "'Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
> Let me hide myself in thee.'"

And then,

> "'Fixed on this ground will I remain,
> Though my heart fail and flesh decay;
> This anchor shall my soul sustain,
> When earth's foundations melt away;
> Mercy's full power I then shall prove,
> Loved with an everlasting love.'

"Brother Charlesworth, this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. I am passing over the flood, but on the other side there shall be no more storms."

During the day he frequently dozed for short periods, and in his waking moments retained perfect consciousness to the last.

Waking from one of his short slumbers, he

looked round upon his relatives and friends who stood weeping about his couch, and recognized them all. When his father came into the room, he motioned for him to come and sit beside him, and said, "This is my honored father. We shall not be long parted." To his unconverted relatives, he spoke with loving faithfulness, saying, "You must live as you have never lived. Give your hearts to God. You will come into the same circumstances as those you see me in. Prepare for death. Prepare to meet God."

To his friend and manager Mr. W. Widdowson, he said, "Prepare to follow me. O, this is hard work, but Jesus is very precious. Prepare to follow me. Be kind to my wife and child."

To Mr. A. Redman he said, "Alfred, you have been a good lad. Do in the future as you have done in the past. Do your best for my wife and child." He was going on to speak, but Mr. Redman could endure it no longer, and so left the room that his overpowering emotion might not disturb the dying one. When he returned, Mr. Mills went on, "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth. Prepare to meet me in Heaven. Do your best for my wife and child."

He then spoke to Mary, who has been a faithful and attached servant of the family for some time,

and said, "Mary, you must stay with the mistress, and be kind to her."

The feelings of his friends during these last sorrowful hours, may be imagined, but cannot be depicted. They were bowed down with the most intense grief, and well they might be, for one was departing, who had been to all of them a faithful generous friend.

After one of his slumbers, he said to Mr. Charlesworth, "The Atonement I have preached so often is my stay now. But I don't know how it is I am so happy. I am such a poor shortcoming creature, I never thought I should be so happy." At another time he said, "I have been preaching of late from that text, 'Then how wilt thou do in the swellings of Jordan?' And now my feet are about touching the cold waters. But the Ark of the Covenant is floating above the dark river of death. Christ is at the helm." And then,

"Part of the host have crossed the flood,
And part are crossing now."

When he saw Dr. Hall in the afternoon about two o'clock, he asked him to tell him plainly whether there were any hope for him, "For," said he, "I am not afraid." And the doctor sat down and said, "Mr. Mills, 'Paul planteth, Apollos watereth, *God giveth* the increase;' I have done for you *all*,

that humanly speaking, can be done, but neither you nor I can set a limit to the power of God." And then our friend said, "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God, whom I shall see for myself and my eyes shall behold, and not another." After a time he said, "My sun seems about to go down at noon; but perhaps I am to be taken away from the evil to come."

Between his short slumberings and frequent faintings he continued to speak, and to utter short prayers, but sometimes his utterances were so feeble that they could only be caught by those nearest to his pillow, and even then not without bowing the ear close to his lips.

He had several times tried to comfort his nearly heartbroken wife, and said very affectionately to her not long before the final hour, "O, my dear, don't weep,—and yet Jesus wept." And then again he blessed his daughter, and urged her to meet him in Heaven.

At about half-past three, his friend Mr. Bassett, arrived from Scarborough, having been telegraphed for in the morning, and when he saw him he exclaimed, "Brother Bassett, we shall meet in glory."

The end was very near. He turned upon his bed, and after murmuring, as though in the act of prayer, "O, Lord God Almighty; O, Lord God Almighty;" without a movement, and without a groan, he fell asleep in Jesus.

CHAPTER IX.

CONDOLENCE.

The interment took place at the General Cemetery, Sheffield, on Thursday, September 7th, 1865. The funeral was intended to be private; but from the well-known character, and merits of the deceased; and from the great respect in which he was held by all classes of his townsmen, it assumed quite a public character. The carriages of the Mayor of Sheffield—T. Jessop, Esq.—and other gentlemen followed in the funeral cortége. There were beside about one hundred of the workmen in the employment of the deceased, whose appearance and demeanour reflected the highest credit upon them; and shewed that they had received benefit as working men, from the influences with which they had been associated at the works. A number of the local preachers, class leaders, stewards, and members of the Surrey Street Chapel, were also present, and took part in the mournful procession. All along the line of route, which lay through Norfolk Road, South Street Park, Broad Street, Dixon

Lane, Market Street, Norfolk Street, South Street Moor, and Cemetery Road to the General Cemetery; large numbers of spectators lined the streets on both sides, eager to shew their respect for the deceased.

The service in the Cemetery Chapel, was a very solemn one. All classes of men mingled together there. Rich and poor, aldermen, town councillors, merchants, manufacturers, tradesmen, mechanics, all joined together in their manifestations of feeling and respect. The service was conducted by the writer of this memoir, who also delivered a funeral address suitable to the occasion, amid the audible sobbing and weeping of the large assembly.

At the grave, a vast concourse of persons had assembled, mostly draped in mourning garments, and all wearing an expression of mourning upon their countenances.

He was laid in a grave next to that where they laid his beloved mother a few years since.

The funeral service was held at Surrey Street Chapel, on Sunday evening. September 17th. By the request of the deceased, the service was conducted by the Revs. John Guttridge, and W. R. Sunman. The congregation was densely crowded, and the service was a most solemn and affecting one. *The Rev.* J. Guttridge preached the sermon

from John II., 25-26, "I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die: believest thou this?" The Rev. W. R. Sunman read the brief memoir, which he had prepared.

Funeral sermons were also preached in Mount Tabor Chapel on Wednesday evening, September 20th, by Rev. James Caughey; and at Eckington on Sunday evening, September 24th, by the Rev. W. R. Sunman. On both occasions the congregations were very large, and deeply affected.

The most sincere sympathy and condolence with the widow and family, have been expressed from all quarters.

On the 13th of September, 1865, at its meeting, the Sheffield Town Council passed the following resolution, by a unanimous vote:—

"That this Council desire to express their sorrow for the death of Mr. Councillor George Mills, whose active and useful public life, justly entitled him to respect and esteem. And that a copy of this resolution be transmitted to Mrs. Mills, by the Mayor, on behalf of the Council, with an assurance of the sympathy felt by them for her bereavement."

In accordance with the foregoing, the resolution was forwarded to Mrs. Mills, with the signature of the Mayor, and the seal of the Corporation.

The various official meetings in connection with

the Surrey Street Circuit and Church, adopted the following resolution of condolence:—

"That this meeting desires to express its profound sorrow on account of the lamented decease of Mr. George Mills, and to offer its most sincere condolence and sympathy to his grief-stricken widow and family. It would also express its high appreciation of the character and talents of Mr. Mills, while it calls to mind with devout gratitude to Almighty God, his unsullied public deportment, his genial disposition, and his usefulness in the various offices of the Church which he filled, but specially as Local Preacher, Leader, and Circuit Steward. At the same time it most earnestly prays that the 'God of all Grace' may comfort and support the bereaved ones, giving them grace to say humbly, 'Thy will be done;' and enabling them to tread in the steps of the departed beloved one, that when they fail on earth, they may be joyously reunited with those that sleep in Jesus."

The following letters of condolence have also been received among many others, and on account of the exceeding richness of the sympathy manifested, and the appropriateness of the sentiments expressed, are inserted here.

The Rev. James Caughey has kindly furnished the author with a contribution "in memoriam," which will be found in the last chapter of this work; and he also addressed the following letter to Mrs. Mills, immediately upon receipt of the sad *intelligence* of the decease of her husband:—

"Douglas, Isle of Man, Sept. 11, 1865.

"My dear Mrs. Mills,

"The news of the death of your beloved husband, and my own dear and constant friend, has reached me here. I cannot tell you how deeply and solemnly it has affected me; and how deeply several from England felt, when I announced it from the pulpit. How then, O, how you must feel! Knowing as I do, how you *loved him*, and how he *loved you*. But I must restrain my pen, for I know that every word of mine will only serve to make your heart bleed afresh, and cause tears to flow which I would rather dry. But you know, my ever dear Mrs. Mills *where* he has gone, and that there is no impassable gulf between; nay more, you have reason to believe his happy spirit is often near you: for I do believe that next to seeing Jesus, he would want to see *you*, and how you bear up under the painful separation; and has often, since he entered into rest returned to wave his wings of healing over you; to soothe and comfort your poor stricken heart; and to whisper in your ear, for the sake of your darling child and his, not to let sorrow break your heart or ruin your health—she who now more than ever, will need a mother's care and guidance. I wish I were near you, for I could talk to you better than I can write. My dear wife joins with me in tenderest sympathy towards you. We hope to see you soon. You cannot help sorrowing: who could that has lost such a loving noble husband? But then your sorrow is full of hope—hope of seeing him again, and meeting him in Paradise, and full of certainty that his home is there among the saints in glory.

"We leave here on Wednesday for Sheffield, and hope soon to be permitted to see you. Love and deep concern to your dear child and yourself, from your constant friend and brother in *Jesus*, (Signed) "James Caughey."

The following is from the Rev. Ed. Wright, of Stockton, who was formerly the Minister of the Surrey Street Circuit, and who has been for many years a friend of the family:—

"Stockton, September 11th, 1865.

"My dear friend,

"I received by this morning's post a card containing the melancholy intelligence of the death of your beloved husband; and I cannot allow a day to pass over without tendering to you and yours, my deep and sincere sympathy with you in your affliction, and assuring you of an interest in my prayers, that you may be Divinely supported and comforted.

"I know something of the worth of him whom you have lost. His was a nature formed to communicate happiness to all around him, and especially to those who stood in the closest and most endearing relation to him. And that naturally loving heart was influenced by the higher and holier principles of the religion of Christ. 'He was a *good man*,' a title far superior to all earthly honors and titles. These considerations while they render the loss you have sustained more painful, will at the same time afford you the sweetest consolation and peace. You have the comfort arising from the reflection, that he has not lived in vain, that his life has not been a blank, that the world has been made better by his labors of love.

"Though departing comparatively early from the scene of his labors and joys, your beloved partner has left a name that 'will smell sweet, and blossom in the dust.' He is of the number of those whose 'memory is blessed.'

"We do not measure the value of men's lives by the num-

ber of years they have lived, but by the use they have made of those years. To live *well*—and I am sure my dear friend did this—is better than merely to live *long*.

"May He in whose promises your beloved one trusted, be your comforter and guide, and may you and yours at last meet together before the Throne,

"'Where sickness and sorrow, pain and death,
Are felt and feared no more.'

"I am yours in Christian affection,

(Signed) "ED. WRIGHT."

The other letter here subjoined was written by a lady, an intimate friend of the family, and appears to us to be such a gem, that its insertion here may comfort others into whose hands this work may fall, as it did comfort those to whom it was addressed. The name from motives of delicacy is of course withheld:—

"* * * * September 7th, 1865.

"My dear Mrs. Mills,

"I cannot tell you how inexpressibly grieved I was, when last evening on the return of Mr. P. from Bristol, he told me of the death of your beloved husband. I do indeed sympathize with you, and the loneliness and wretchedness you must feel in so suddenly losing the dearest friend, the most attached husband. Every one that knew Mr. Mills must at once have loved him. So much large-heartedness, such thorough genuine kindness and hospitality, I never met in any one else. I did so enjoy coming to see you all; and now, to think that in this world I shall never see him again! My own dear father, who cherished such a friendship for your

husband, would indeed have felt his death acutely. In sorrow and in joy I always think of my dear father, and so you will always think of Mr. Mills. You will still feel that from a brighter and better world he cares for you and his dear child. Ah, Mrs. Mills, he is not lost to you, only gone before. All the comfort Christianity, and firm faith on the goodness, the loving-kindness, the mercy of God, can give, you have. You do not sorrow as those who have no hope, though you look forward to the time you must still pass in this world, without joy. But the day may not be far distant when you will rejoin your loved ones in habitations beyond the skies. But your work is not yet finished in this world. You have *your* child and *his* to live for, to watch over, to protect, to be in this world mother and father to; and we know God has promised to be the father of the fatherless, and to comfort the widow. He will comfort you, and even by this great trouble, this sad affliction, bring you nearer to Himself. My poor dear mamma will indeed feel for you, she knows what she suffers herself. She is away from us at Brighton. My darling sister, her two boys and husband, have gone to Africa. You may imagine how desolate she feels, when she thinks most probably she will never see her dear youngest child, and the sweet grandchildren again. I am sure even in the midst of your own great sorrow, you will feel for her, on whom blow after blow has fallen. Give my sincere love to dear Anne; my own loss is so recent, I know how to feel for her; almost the heaviest trouble any one in all their life can feel.

"If there is anything in any way I can do for you, let me know. God bless, comfort and console you.

"Believe me, your attached friend,

(Signed) " * * * * "

CHAPTER X.

PARTING COUNSELS.

"Lives of *good* men all remind us,
We may make our lives sublime;
And departing, leave behind us,
Footprints on the sands of time.
Footprints that perhaps another,
Sailing o'er life's solemn main,
Some forlorn or shipwrecked brother,
Seeing, may take heart again.
Let us then be up and doing,
With a heart for any fate;
Still achieving, still pursuing,
Learn to labor and to wait."

LONGFELLOW.

THE story of another life is closed. But its lessons repeat themselves again and again. The wisdom to be gained from it, will never die. Thank God, the good which men do, lives after them; and as the circlets caused by a stone cast into the bosom of a placid lake, roll outward, becoming wider and wider, until they break upon the shore; so the waves of goodness which men stir up on earth, roll

onward and onward till they break upon the shores of Heaven, and breathe everlasting happiness upon the hearts of the blessed.

The man, of whom it has been our delight to write is dead, and they have laid him in his sleeping-place, to await the morning of the Resurrection. But his example lives; and even from his tomb, that example urges the young to seek success in life; and the Christian to be up and doing, "working while it is called day, because the night cometh when no man can work."

If "example is better than precept," then the young especially have no cause to complain of the paucity of examples of men who have risen from the ranks to stand before princes; and who, coming forth from the darkness of obscurity have left their names carved indelibly upon the annals of time. Such examples, innumerable in the past, as well as in the present, serve to shew us how the determined man will triumph. What example can be more spirit-stirring than that of the great Professor Fawcett, M.P., who though afflicted with the dread calamity of blindness, and obliged to say with the pathetic Milton,

> "O, dark, dark, dark, amid the blaze of noon,
> Irrecoverably dark, total eclipse,
> *Without* all hopes of day:"

yet has become, by dint of assiduity and toil, one of the most eminent political economists of England, and one of the leading spirits of the age.

We believe that every obstacle must yield to the unconquerable force of earnestness. Perseverance is invincible. It may not be within the power of all men to become great and celebrated; but it is possible for all, if they will but be earnest, judicious, and persevering, to raise themselves to a position of respectability and esteem. This is what is demanded of all by society; and those only who do it, will ever be widely mourned by their compeers, and praised by a strictly judging posterity.

The man to whose memory this memorial is erected, raised himself by dint of earnestness, to a position of wealth and honor which is envied by many, and is impossible to none who will use the same means; and this record of his lifework is written principally for the purpose of urging the young to imitate his example, while they are encouraged by his success. True, his was not a worldwide notoriety; but he was well-known in his own town, and as well-esteemed; and no praise can be higher than to say, as we can truly say, that amongst those who came nearest to him, and knew him best, he was most beloved.

"Follow them who through faith and patience

inherit the promises," is the injunction of the Divine word. We would therefore indicate some points of character in the deceased, which seem worthy of universal imitation. He was of a *genial* disposition, delighting to smile himself, and to bask in the smile of others. It were well if all men strove thus to find out the bright lines of the picture of life, and to pursue the flying rays of sunlight as they gleam so sweetly and glide so swiftly over the landscape. Storm-clouds would seem less numerous, and sunbeams would appear to shine oftener. Life would become more enchanting and fruitful. The tear of sorrow would not flow so freely, nor the sigh of grief be heard so hopelessly. My friend, smile when thou canst, and take care that thou never dost become a gloomy melancholic.

His *business* life also deserves contemplation and study. Trained from his early days to labor, his was eminently a life of toil. But his toil succeeded in obtaining for him one of the largest businesses in the trade. He was so successful that at the time he died, he contemplated retiring from business. He had amassed a fortune ere he scarce had passed middle life. And what he did by an earnest devotedness, and untiring industry, may be done, to some extent at any rate, by all others who are *willing to give* the reins to toil. "Labor overcomes all."

It has been matter of complaint, that while biographies of warriors and statesmen, poets and preachers abound; there are but few records of the lives of men who were engrossed in commercial pursuits; and that even those few present their subjects before readers, not so much as merchants, but as men; not so much as buyers and sellers, but as Christians. The object of this work has been, so to amalgamate the two representations, that it may be seen that the claims of business are compatible with the claims of religion; so that young men particularly who are just launching out upon the voyage of life may be incited to labor diligently for the things of this life; at the same time seeking first "the Kingdom of God, and his Righteousness."

The life of our friend has proved that there is the possibility of amassing wealth by honest and honorable means. That the "tricks of trade" and the common chicanery of the office or warehouse, are alike unworthy of the true man of business, as of the true Christian. And that the surest way to success is by a constant courting of the smile of God, and a trustful reliance upon his promise, "No good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly." The subject whose character we are striving to limn with faithful pencil, always *felt as the* poet did:—

"I want the witness, Lord,
That all I do is right;
According to thy will and word,
Well-pleasing in thy sight."

His nature shrank from everything which was low, sordid and mean. Honorable himself even to fastidiousness, he was cut to the heart by any unhandsome behaviour on the part of others in the same position, or any dishonesty on the part of those who were dependent upon him. And yet he forgave readily; and when as was more than once the case, he was defrauded by those in his employment, he yet abstained from inflicting the penalty of the law, thinking that detection was punishment sufficient; and that by imprisonment he might destroy their only chance of retrieving the past.

He was eminently a *business* man. To the last, he went to the works early in the morning, and returned in the evening *only* when his work was done. And with regard to that work itself, he was not content to be outdone or even rivalled. He desired and strove earnestly after the commendation of his customers. He therefore gained a first-class reputation in the trade, and was able very often to say to hesitating buyers, "Now you cannot do so well anywhere else." They saw that it was to their interest to deal with him; and so his business increased year after year, till his premises

at Neepsend extended to the imposing size now presented by them; he having also premises in two other places in Sheffield, and at Chesterfield.

There is nothing to hinder young men from rising in the same way, if they have ordinary abilities, are not afraid of toil, and are determined "to provide things honest in the sight of all men."

It would not be well however to close this part of the present chapter, without an earnest exhortation to Christians, to imitate the virtues of the deceased, and to serve the Master faithfully as he did in the time of health. Many souls will be the crown of his rejoicing in the day of God. A starless diadem will not deck his brow. His record is now in many hearts, and at the last he shall "shine as the stars for ever and ever."

"He being dead yet speaketh." From the world of glory, his triumphant spirit yet utters the words of exhortation, saying "Follow me as I followed Christ;" and "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might." Christians, there is one faithful soldier less in the Church militant; but the strength of the "sacramental host of God's elect" need not be diminished if you make up by increased diligence the lack of labor; and soon by your more earnest efforts, the "Captain of our Salvation" shall largely reinforce his thinned ranks.

A standard-bearer has fallen! Therefore ye valiant ones, stand forward in the breach, where the fire is the hottest, and the fight the deadliest, determined that the strongholds of sin shall be taken, and that the banner of Calvary shall wave over their embattled heights.

If any are inclined to criticise the dealings of God with his Church in the removal of such a man, let them hear what God says to the questioners: "Be still and know that I am God." Our friend cherished a profound reliance upon the goodness and wisdom of God, and used often to sing that verse with true fervour,

> "His purposes will ripen fast,
> Unfolding every hour;
> The bud may have a bitter taste,
> But sweet will be the flower."

"God buries his workmen, but carries on his work." And the wisest course for mortal man to pursue, as well as the one to which blessing is attached, is to say, "Thy will be done."

Yet we cannot but mourn his decease. *He hath died in his prime.* There is cause for regret when an aged Christian dies, for, humanly speaking, the world is the worse for his absence; but when the good man doth not live out more than half his *days, the world* may well mourn, for it cannot do

without its holy ones. They are the salt of the earth—the lights of the world. Ten righteous men in it, and Sodom would have been spared.

And *he hath died when there were renewed hopes that he would live*, and when there was the hope that his future life would be devoted more fully than ever to the service of humanity and God. In early life he had made a vow, that if God would prosper him, he would retire from business, and devote his time, talents, wealth, and all, to the diffusion of truth and happiness. There may be something of the trader's keenness in such a vow, and many may think that men have no right to bargain with God; but there is Scriptural example for it, as in the case of Jacob, and Scriptural encouragement for it, as in the case of the contract God desired to make with his people Israel. "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house; and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of Hosts, if I will not open you the windows of Heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it." Our friend made such a vow; but just as he was looking forward himself to the realization of all his desires, and as others were looking up to him with the anxiety of expectation, the Lord said to him "Come up higher;"

and from the Church beneath, he was caught up to the Church above.

We sorrow, but still we say "Thou doest all things well." And in words which we have often heard him sing, we would, rather than recal his spirit, say,

"No dear companion, no,
We gladly let thee go;
From a suffering Church beneath,
To a reigning Church above;
Thou has more than conquered death,
Thou art crowned with life and love."

The lesson God intends to teach us by the sudden and premature death of one so universally respected and beloved is, "Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of Man cometh." More than one who stood by his death-couch, and heard his joyous words, and watched his tranquil departure, breathed the prayer "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his." But that this may be the case, our life must be the life of the righteous. We must strive to benefit our fellow men, and to glorify God. We would therefore address the sorrowing survivors, and all others into whose hands this volume may fall, in the stirring words of the American poet, Carlos Wilcox:—

"Would'st thou from sorrow find a sweet relief?
Or is thy heart oppressed with woes untold?
Balm would'st thou gather for corroding grief?
Pour blessings round thee, like a shower of gold.

* * * * * *

Some high or humble enterprize of good
Contemplate, till it shall possess thy mind,
Become thy study, pastime, rest and food,
And kindle in thy heart a flame refined.
Pray Heaven for firmness thy whole soul to bind
To this thy purpose—to begin; pursue;
With thoughts all fixed, and feelings purely kind;
Strength to complete, and with delight review,
And grace to give the praise where all is ever due."

CHAPTER XI.

ADDENDA.

THE Rev. James Caughey having kindly and without hesitation, promised to enrich this volume with a contribution from his own earnest and eloquent pen; the author has the pleasure in this chapter to present to the reader, in its entirety, the following beautiful paper, written in the form of a letter, by the great American Evangelist:—

Sheffield, Oct. 10, 1865.

My dear Sir,

The past returns upon me with great force, as I take up my pen to acknowledge yours of yesterday. Another beloved friend and host of mine, George Mills, has passed away into the skies. Thought, with many pensive recollections, crowd around my heart; memory is all awake and rife with them; happy seasons of social intercourse, *and sweet co*incidence of thought and feeling;

"The feast of reason and the flow of soul,"

in which our departed friend was so well qualified always to sustain his part; blissful hours, oft repeated, never insipid; delightful expositions of "Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace."—Prov. iii., 17. Alas! to return no more, not in the same happy conjunction of circumstances; for the sunshine of his pleasing countenance, the music of his cheerful voice, and the ring of his merry laugh, will be heard there no more.

"Thou hast gone to the grave:
We no longer behold thee."

I stood by his grave a few days since, lost in thought, and could hardly drag myself away from the spot. His happy spirit has ascended to a higher state of society—nobler company—

"Dwelling in the land of glory,
With the saints and angels now."

The animating voice of that pleasant soul is now enlivening other circles, in a happier and holier state of being. May we meet him there!

The sketch of Mr. Mills's life and character, as read by yourself in Mount Tabor Chapel, on the night in which I endeavoured to "improve his death" for the benefit of the living, I listened to with feelings of the deepest interest and affection.

It exhibited such a complete and life-like portrait of my lamented friend, that little else seems left for me than to breathe over his memory the feelings of my pensive heart, with its tenderest memories.

I was in the Isle of Man when the sad tidings of his sudden death reached me. In the shock my sympathies oscillated painfully between the living and the dead—between the stricken heart of her he had left behind him, and the tender yearning of that departed spirit just severed from her by death's interposing tide. I cannot well describe what I felt in the moment, nor yet in the more protracted sensations, as thought on the wings of memory rushed back into the past, and forward into the eternal future. For sensations do rush upon the mind on learning the sudden and unexpected death of a beloved friend, which can hardly ever be realized under any other circumstances; something akin to what another felt, who is now himself in the spirit land, who remarked on a certain occasion, he never went so far down the dark valley, nor got so steady a gaze over the verge of time into the depths of eternity; it was especially so with me when speaking of his death a few minutes after, to happy believers and awe-struck sinners.

Thousands, says some poet, bewail a hero, and a nation mourns the death of a king, but the whole universe laments, or sympathizes in the death of a man of prayer. That George Mills was a man of prayer, thousands have repeatedly felt in Sheffield, especially on those memorable Sabbath evenings during the great outpouring of the Holy Spirit in 1858, and, indeed upon several similar occasions since, when, in "the opening prayer," he carried the vast congregation heavenward, as on angels' wing, until we felt as if breathing the air of Heaven, or listening to the hallelujahs of the saints in glory; or bearing us downward in the other direction, until poor alarmed sinners felt as if they were tottering upon the airy precipice of eternity and brink of Hell! How many, on such occasions formed resolutions to flee from the wrath to come, we may never know in this world. His quotations from the Scriptures, at such times were wonderfully apt, appropriate, and beautiful. Nor do I ever remember him attempting to bear away the masses thus heavenward or hellward in prayer, without first laying down a solid basis composed of some of the finest and sublimest passages in the Word of God; but when once laid, he would spring therefrom like an eagle from his lofty battlement of rock; and then soaring aloft with undimmed

eye, amidst a blaze of truth,—I have thought of the eagle again,—

> "With his wing on the wind,
> And his eye on the sun,
> He swerved not a hair,
> But pressed onward right on."

The great revival just referred to, continued for the space of thirteen months. During nine months of that period I was entertained at the house of Mr. Mills. There I was made acquainted with his home-life; and I must say it was truly beautiful. Whatever might be the state of wind and weather outside, within around his fireside there was never anything else than peace and happiness. His hospitality was truly English and generous. No one ever sat down at his table without a feeling of being heartily welcome. Nor do I ever remember hearing the character of an absent person traduced at his table. Of the absent only good, or silence with regard to them, seems to have been his motto.

His friendship for myself was sincere and constant. Our correspondence by letter was frequent. How often by pen and word of mouth has he said, "Mr. Caughey, you must ever consider my house your English home!" Precious friend! neither of *of* us thought how soon he was to be removed to *his eternal home*!

"The departed! the departed!
They visit us in dreams,
And they glide above our memories,
As shadows o'er the streams.

"We know that thou art happy now,
With thine angel plumage on;
But our hearts are very desolate,
To know that thou art gone!

"And where the cheerful lights of home
In constant lustre burn,
The departed, the departed,
They never more return!"

I have written this letter under feelings of gratitude towards the departed, for his many acts of kindness towards myself, and with sincere sympathy for his bereaved widow and fatherless child. I feel, since his departure, as if a shade has mingled with the sunshine of my path. But, as life advances, I may expect more and more of this, perhaps, as friend after friend of former years pass away into the unseen world. Indeed my friends are gathering fast on the other side of Jordan. And of those that remain, I can say with a German divine, I know men who, if they go home before me, will leave the world more lonesome and desolate in my esteem, and will make Heaven better known, and me more ready to depart; and I esteem

myself happy at having found such individuals in my path through life; the most precious gifts which earth, at God's command can present to us, are not horses, or mules, or sounding metal, but dear and like-minded individuals connected with us, and cordial and intimate friends, who have been as a strong support to the bending reed, a lighthouse on a distant coast to the tempest-tossed mariner, or as a careful gardener to the isolated exotic! My friends are hastening fast away from earth, like doves from "the windy tempest." I meet them no more in my journeyings to and fro on this or the western continent. They are lost to sight, not to faith. The love I bore them remains glowing in my breast. Death cannot chill it; the dreary grave cannot destroy its sweetness. It still embraces them. The tomb can interpose no barrier. A love once "immersed in immortality," soars far above death, hell and the grave. Heaven becomes nearer, dearer and more attractive as the number of my friends increases upon that happy shore!

To breathe the rude air of this lower world; to submit my weary feet to a yet greater share of the dust of my earthly pilgrimage; to face the yet greater storms of earth; to raise my voice in battle *for* Jesus, for truth, and for perishing souls, in *leading on the* militant hosts of God's elect to cer-

tain victory, seem my lot for the present—how much longer God only knows—while my friends above are breathing the free air of Paradise, and mingling their hallelujahs and acclamations of joy among the palm-bearers of Heaven!

Then farewell for the present ye saints in glory! Hail! and farewell my beloved Mills!

"Brighter, fairer far than living,
With no trace of woe or pain,
Robed in everlasting beauty,
Shall I see thee once again.
By the light that never fadeth,
Underneath eternal skies,
When the dawn of resurrection
Breaks o'er a deathless Paradise."

I think myself happy, dear sir, and thank you also, for this opportunity of expressing the emotions of my pensive heart, in memory of our deceased friend; and you are at liberty to make what use of it you please.

Affectionately in Jesus, thy Lord and mine,

JAMES CAUGHEY.

Rev. W. R. Sunman.

The touching and appropriate verses which follow, are from the pen of the Rev. John Guttridge; and were read by him at the close of the sermon

which he preached, in connection with the funeral service, at Surrey Street Chapel.

By special request he has kindly permitted them to appear in this work; and they shew plainly the high estimation which he cherished for the departed one; between whom and himself, there has existed an intimate friendship for many years.

In Memory of Mr. Councillor Mills.

Adieu; my friend; thou'rt sainted now,
Celestial garlands wreathe thy brow,
The Vale of Death thy feet have trod,
The conflict's o'er, now rest with God.

Adieu; my friend; the hour of pain
Will ne'er to thee return again,
The storms have past—the calm has come,
The battle's fought—the victory's won.

Adieu; my friend; thoughts sweet of thee,
Will silently steal over me,
Thy home and habit, speech and smile,
Would many a friendly hour beguile.

Adieu; my friend; tears oft have started,
O'er her—thy mate—the broken-hearted,
And o'er the child thou lov'dst so well,
Thy pride of her, words could not tell.

A father's love—'twas her's alone;
How warmly welcomed to her home;

The charm is gone—the spell is broken,
Though sad—we're hushed—'tis God hath spoken.

Adieu; my friend; to thee I'll soar,
Thou art not lost, but gone before;
My soul from thee death cannot sever,
Thou art my friend, my friend for ever.

THE END.

J. MORTON, PRINTER, UNION STREET, SHEFFIELD.